

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1501

April 22, 2019

The Honorable Daniel R. Levinson
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
330 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Mr. Levinson:

We write in support of your decision to launch an investigation into whether Medicaid managed care organizations have complied with federal requirements when denying patients access to requested services and prescriptions. As U.S. Representatives from Iowa, we believe this is an important step to provide answers for our constituents, who have paid a devastating price since Iowa turned the provision of Medicaid over to managed care organizations in 2016. It is important to move this investigation forward quickly and we look forward to your findings.

In Iowa and states across the country, there have been reports of managed care organizations denying essential services to patients. The *Des Moines Register* has highlighted numerous instances in Iowa where patients were denied the care they needed, and in many cases, Iowans have battled lengthy and complicated processes to appeal denials of care.¹ It has been heartbreaking for us to hear cases where our constituents were denied vital services, like lifesaving tube feedings, or needed equipment, like wheelchairs.

The transition to privatized Medicaid has been disruptive for Iowa patients and their families while managed care organizations have not saved our state money. In fact, Iowa's Medicaid per-patient cost has tripled since the transition to managed care.² Not only have managed care organizations failed Iowa patients – they have failed to deliver on their promise to taxpayers. We believe this is just another example of why managed care organizations need rigorous oversight and to be held accountable to the public.

¹ Jason Clayworth, "Care denied: How Iowa's Medicaid maze is trapping sick and elderly patients in endless appeals," *Des Moines Register*, 2018, <http://features.desmoinesregister.com/news/medicaid-denials>; Jason Clayworth, "How privatized Medicaid is systematically denying hundreds of disabled Iowans the medical equipment their doctors say they need," *Des Moines Register*, April 8, 2018, <https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/investigations/2018/04/08/privatized-medicicaid-denying-hundreds-disabled-iowans-medical-equipment/1069296001>.

² Tony Leys, "Iowa Medicaid's per-member cost increases nearly triple since privatization," *Des Moines Register*, September 19, 2018, <https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/health/2018/09/19/iowa-medicicaid-cost-increases-nearly-triple-under-privatized-managed-care-legislature-kim-reynolds/1293372002>.

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The devastating results of the decision to privatize Medicaid in our state have underscored the need for a federal investigation, and we look forward to a timely report on your findings. We ask that you keep the Iowa delegation informed throughout the process. For the good of Medicaid patients in Iowa and around the country, we will wholeheartedly support all appropriate actions and recommendations that emerge from this long overdue investigation.


Sincerely,



Abby Finkenauer
Member of Congress



Dave Loebsack
Member of Congress



Cindy Axne
Member of Congress